

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held February 3, 2020 in the Board of Education Room, 67 Washington Avenue, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Janet Morgan, Pam Zmek, George Bauer, Carol Ann Brown, Ed Decortin, Maryanne Van Aken, Mike Devine, Jim Crocker, Wayne McAllister and Joseph Olzacki. Also in attendance were, Pam Sordi, Wendy Nelson Kauffman, Wendy Yatsenick, Jason Bouchard, Todd Gorski, Abigail Peck, Jane Caruso, Donna Marcinek, Ken Schultz, Steve Bingham, a reporter from the Voices, members of the WMS Choir, 15 residents and BOE clerk, Karen Daley.

1. Call to Order

Janet Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Morgan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Zmek motioned to approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of January 6, 2020. Seconded by Ms. Brown. **The motion carried 5-0-2.**

4. Student Representatives – WMS – August Mcleran and Maia Colavito.

The WMS Alliance hosted a Spirit week in December just before our Holiday break that culminated with our first Warrior Rally of the year. The whole school came together to compete in “minute to win it” activities with other competitions, like dressing up in firemen gear and running a relay with all the gear on. The energy and electricity of the crowd was felt long after the Warrior Rally ended. A few students and staff captured it best by saying it was one of their best days yet at WMS! Also in December, our Winter sports season began with Boys and Girls Basketball, as well as Cheerleading. Since the start of the New Year, the ball has been rolling with all kinds of activities and events. The WMS Music Department held a successful concert, after having to postpone it in December due to weather. All of the students worked hard to pull off a great musical event. Not only was the performance spectacular but the display of the ceramic bells was also really cool. Students in 7th grade wedged and rolled clay into cone shapes and then glazed them after they were bisque fired. Something else that is very exciting is the preparation of our first drama performance, “Singing in the Rain”. The cast has been selected and roles have been assigned. Play practice is after school from 2:30-4:30. We work to memorize our lines and to get a source for our props, but behind all of this preparation we support each other, have many laughs, and enjoy the time we spend together. Be on the lookout for our March performance date and time so you can come out and support WMS’s budding actresses and actors that have worked to make this a great performance for everyone. In families during the month of January, we have been celebrating the message of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr by watching videos and talking about the importance of Dr. King’s remembrance. We also had a contest with 17 questions about Dr. King in combined families to see which group of families would get the most questions right. The most recent contest we had was the Pancake Breakfast donation. Families were asked to donate items to the Pancake breakfast and each day Alliance members tallied the items brought in by families. The family with the most items won a free ticket to the pancake breakfast. The Leo club is collecting backpacks to create care packages for the homeless. After the backpack drive, there will be a drive to collect necessities to fill the backpacks with items such as hats, blankets, toiletries, etc. In Cooking club, students have been doing cooking projects that reflect the skills they have learned in class. They are making recipes that are quick and easy to make but wouldn’t be something they would normally make in culinary. In art, four students got Scholastic art awards. The talented students that got this prestigious award are Dylan Duda, Luke Cenatiempo,

Emma Yakavonis, and Madison Willis. Since Dylan received a gold medal, he has been entered into the nationals. In addition to this, WMS also held a small art show. In 6th grade tech-ed, students made music videos using Adobe Premiere Pro, a professional editing software. They are currently learning how to produce a product in the wood lab using a raw material and turning it into a finished project. At the end of the trimester students will complete a Warrior News Network production. In 7th grade engineering, students are using the engineering design process to design and build a carbon dioxide powered dragster. Another event that Alliance is working to organize is an "Upstander Rally". Plans are underway and more information and details will come - be on the lookout!

5. Superintendent's Report -

- a. WMS Choir - The WMS choir sang 2 pieces for the attendees of the Board of Education meeting.
- b. Vo-Ag Vision – Ed Belinsky, Director of the Agriscience program at NHS gave a comprehensive update on where the program is today and what he envisions for the future. There is a misconception that agriculture is disappearing in the state. There are thousands of jobs in the industry but students need to have a quality education to fill these positions. They are looking forward to the addition of 3 building to the Ag facilities. Horse Management is limited by space available in the winter months. The addition of an arena will allow the students to learn year round. Connecticut is a horse friendly state and there is money to be made in occupations related to horse management. A donation has been received of sleigh and horse buggy to be utilized by the students for learning. A garage and storage building will be used to expand the nurse/ landscape curriculum. This is a huge part of the Agriculture revenue in the state. Right now the students do not have a dedicated space to work on their equipment. The addition of the garage can really help the students learn the skills related to landscaping. Mr. Belinsky is hoping to get the students out in the community do service projects around town. The new sap house will be a great step up from the sap house that was built by the students. This program isn't only about sugar trees but also tree management and natural resources. There are many careers that stem from natural resource education. Employers are looking for students with not only college, but high school education in agriculture. Mechanics is an important part of the Agriscience education. This education is about teaching students to be problem solvers so they can be capable to move and change with the times. The production class is diversifying the animals that are cared for. This expansion is to mimic the industries that are in the state of Connecticut. Vet science is the most popular area of study with the students and that program is growing. Mr. Belinsky is looking for a more hands on experience for the Vet Science students. A dog spa will be opened at NHS to allow students to work hands on with animals. Aquaponics and hydroponics newly developed facility and is of great interest for students and the community; this process is the future of agriculture. NHS is on the cutting edge of this industry and has one of the best programs of the Ag schools in the country. Mr. Belinsky would like to team up with the school cafeterias as well as with the Woodbury and Bethlehem food banks to provide food for the community. Mr. Belinsky is grateful for the support of the Board and all that they provide for the students. Mr. Decortin asked if there are plans to incorporate drones into the curriculum. It is a technology that is upcoming in the Agriculture education. This is yet another tie between technology and agriculture.

6. Committee Reports

- a. **Finance** – Operating budget was reviewed. A very comprehensive conversation took place regarding the request for additional funding for the Agriscience and Technology Building Project. Detailed notes can be found in the Finance Committee Minutes from 2/30/2020 and the Committee will move the request forward to a vote from the full Board this evening. Also reviewed were two horse drawn vehicle donations and a grant for Minority Teacher Recruitment. Those will also be presented to the full Board this evening. Audit services were discussed and will be revisited at the next Finance Committee meeting.
- b. **Policy**
 - i. **5141.214 Sunscreen** - First read
 - ii. **5100 Attendance** – First read

- iii. **1112 News Media Relationships** – First read
- iv. **5131 Bus Conduct** – First read

7. Board Chair Comments –

- a. none

8. Public Comment – David Schultz from Woodbury spoke about the Rising Stars event. The is an initiative for students to learn more about civic life. An essay contest took place for Region 14 middle and high school students. An award ceremony will take place on February 19th at Woodbury Middle School. Three students will be honored from WMS for their essay efforts.

9. Old Business - none

10. New Business

- a. NHS Trip to Spain – Mr. Bauer *Moved that the Region 14 Board of Education approve the Nonnewaug High School trip to Spain in the spring of 2021 for 10-12 student, 2 background checked chaperones, via air, bus and train, funded by the students.* Seconded by Mr. Crocker. Ms. Caruso, Spanish Teacher at NHS spoke to the real world applications of traveling abroad. The trip is directly aligned with the curriculum in the Spanish Department. It teaches the student to think of the world at large and seeing first hand is different than learning it in a book and these tend to be life changing experiences. These trips are also a great stepping stone for students who choose to travel abroad in college. Students gain an opportunity to use the language skills they are learning in the classroom. Travel dates would be coordinated with the April vacation in 2021, though students may need to miss a couple of days of classes. Dr. Olzacki supports the trip and the benefits it can provide the students. He would ask the board to conditionally approve the trip as presented and Ms. Caruso will return with more information regarding the costs, discount date time frames, dates and locations of tours, travel insurance and how many students are truly interested in attending to receive final approval and sign off from the Board. A parent night will be held by the tour company, Explorica, to answer questions from the families. Ms. Caruso can look into fundraising opportunities. Mr. Bauer moved to table the motion, Seconded by Ms. Brown. **Motion tabled 8-0-0.**
- b. NHS Cheerleading Trip to Virginia Beach, Virginia. – Mr. Decortin *Moved that the Region 14 Board of Education approve the Nonnewaug High School Cheerleading Teams trip to Virginia Beach, Virginia from March 13th -16th 2020 for 10 students, 7 background checked chaperones via air and shuttle bus funded by the students.* Seconded by Mr. Crocker. **Motion carried 8-0-0.**
- c. Graduation Requirements – NHS Administration met with other administrators, counselors, they looked at other schools and Wendy Nelson Kauffman attended state functions regarding the change in requirements. These new guidelines provide a framework to allow student to create their own path graduation. Region 14 will need to move from 23 to 25 credits to graduate to meet the state mandate. These new requirements will be for the Freshman and beyond, all other students will adhere to the old requirement that were in place when they began high school. With the guidance of the States framework, Region 14 staff broke down how the students will need to fill these new, broad groups of study area. Students will be required to earn four credits in English. All students must now take one year of a world language. Math was adjusted to three credits though many students who are college bound will take additional math classes. This can and will be tailored to the students and their career paths. Three credits will be required for science. Students will then choose three STEM classes. Agriscience students will easily fill the STEM classes. A full credit of health is now required. Mastery based diploma assessment is now required. This is a way for the students to apply what they have learned in a specific content area. Apprenticeships, work studies, SAE's can all fill this requirement and is very open to the student on how to meet this requirement. Community Service total of

18 hours will be required over the course of the four years. Most students are already doing this but the counseling department will aid students through the process and the hours will be kept track of by their counselors. The State has given the schools the chance to be more broad with the student's education. The program of studies will be tailored to the new requirements so the students can understand which requirements they are filling with the individual classes. The Freshman year is generally prescribed and will continue to be. The changes really take place in the Junior and Senior year when the students begin to focus on what is of interest to them. The counselors will work hard with the students to pick the courses that appeal to them within the framework of the requirements. The Mastery Based Learning will be a chance for the students to get out into the community. There will be a requirement for an additional staff member to cover the Health Sections as required now by the State. The impact may not be that great as a good number of the students are already taking 25 credits by the time they graduate. These graduation requirements should be review by the Board and then voted on at the next meeting.

- d. VoAg Funding – The need for additional funding for the Agriscience and Technology Building project was discussed in the Finance Committee meeting at length and detailed notes can be found in the Finance Committee Meeting minutes. The Finance Committee meeting has moved this motion forward to the full Board for a vote. Mr. Bauer *moved that the Region 14 Board of Education authorize the Director of Finance and Operations to commit an additional \$99,058 (new total committed equals \$320,000) from the Region 14 Capital Reserve Projects Fund as its share of the State of Connecticut Vo Ag Building Grant #214-0094 VA/EA.* Seconded by Mr. Crocker. **Motion carried 8-0-0.**
- e. Donation – Mr. Bauer *Moved that the Region 14 Board of Education accept the donation of the Antique Horse Drawn Vehicles valued at \$8985.00.* Seconded by Ms. Zmek. **Motion carried 7-0-1.**
- f. Grant – Mr. Bauer *moved that the Region 14 Board of Education accept the Minority Teacher Recruitment Grant of \$3579.00.* Seconded by Ms. Zmek. **Motion carried 8-0-0.**
- g. Healthy Food Certification –
 - i. Mr. Bauer *moved that the Region 14 Board of Education, Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.* Seconded by Ms. Zmek. **Motion carried 8-0-0.**
 - ii. Mr. Bauer *moved that the Region 14 Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met:*
 - 1) *the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend;*
 - 2) *the sale is at the location of the event; and*
 - 3) *the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the food sales.*Seconded by Ms. Van Aken. **Motion carried 8-0-0.**

- iii. Ms. Van Aken moved that the Region 14 Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met:
- 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend;
 - 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. The "school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the beverage sales.
- Seconded by Mr. Bauer. **Motion carried 8-0-0.**

- h. Board and Superintendent Evaluation – Mr. Bauer moved that the Region 14 Board of Education enter into executive session for the purpose of a personnel matter; specifically, for the Board Members and Superintendents evaluation and performance review. Seconded by Mr. Crocker. **Motioned carried 8-0-0.**

The Board entered executive session at 9:04 pm and invited Dr. Olzacki to attend.

The Board returned from executive session at 10:40 pm.

11. **Other Business** - none

12. **Adjournment**

Ms. Zmek moved to adjourn and seconded by Mr. Bauer. **Motion carried 8-0-0.**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:41 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen Daley, BOE Clerk

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Karen Daley, Board Clerk, 2/10/2020